

VOLUNTEER VIBE

Shawnee National Forest

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Spring 2010

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SAFETY

CORNER...



1. Remember to call in to Kelly (618-559-8648) when beginning and ending your volunteer service for the day. Safety is the #1 priority of the volunteer program.

2. Always check weather conditions before the trip, Be prepared and pack a survival kit to be carried by each person. Kits should include but not limited to, survival blanket, water proof matches, extra water, and food.

3. Watch out for warning signs of hypothermia. Symptoms begin with feeling cold, experiencing pain in extremities and shivering as the body tries to raise its temperature.

4. Remember when volunteering it is also extremely important to wear proper PPE (personal protection equipment) at all times. Hardhats are a must, and gloves go a long way to protect hands. Sturdy shoes and well-worn jeans, along with layers to keep you warm and can be removed if necessary.

Guess this Place—



Can you find this place?

Here's a hint: Over time, erosion has carved a deep box canyon located below this overlook. A cool lush bottomland habitat thrives on the canyon floor.

From this "place" visitors can enjoy expansive views of the colorful cliffs, the Big Muddy River and the Mississippi River floodplain.

If you recognize this place take someone who has never been. If you have never been here read through the newsletter to find out the location...then go!

We need **you** to fill this spot with your favorite trail. Give us a picture, trail name, and what you like most about it. Send your attached article to shawneevolunteercorps@yahoo.com and your favorite trail maybe the "Featured Trail" in the next Volunteer Vibe!

Happy Trails Justin!

The Shawnee Volunteer Corps would like to wish Justin Dotson a fond farewell. Justin who has served as the Volunteer Coordinator for the Hidden Springs Ranger District has accepted a new position on the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. We wish Justin and his family the best of luck as they begin their new journey!



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Tips for Backpacking Lighter and Smarter

-Don't Pack when your hungry.

Figure out how much food you need on your trip and pack that amount.

Having 2 pounds of extra food at the end of your trip, depending on how hard it was, may feel like 10.

-Try Teamwork. Does your group really need 2 compasses? Lose redundant stuff like extra toothpaste, bug spray, etc.

-Downsize your DEET. Practice portion control with the bug juice, sunscreen, toothpaste, condiments, and even medications. Use film canisters or plastic bags instead of original packing.

-Pick items that multitask. Take things that do double duty like hiking poles to set up a tarp or wearing the tarp like a shawl.

-Forsake your fork. Make it easy, do one pot meals. Essential cookware: one pot, one lid, one mug, and one spoon.

****more on next page****

Three Weekends of Training?!

For three straight weekends, the Mississippi Bluffs Ranger District and Shawnee Volunteer Corps offered certifications to local volunteers. The certifications offered were First Aid/CPR, crosscut saw, and chainsaw.

First Aid/CPR- First Aid/CPR is an important and necessary training to have when you are working in the field. Accidents happen, always unexpectedly, having the basic knowledge of First Aid/CPR is just being wise. Participants learned proper ways to treat cuts, burns, choking, drowning and heart attacks. Also, they learned proper ways to do CPR as well as assessing situations and looking over scenes to determine if they are safe or not.

Crosscut Saw- During crosscut training, participants learned about proper handling of crosscut saws and axes. They also learned the proper way to sharpen both the saw and ax and how to "hang" an ax properly. Participants learned about personal protective equipment and about situational awareness. Lastly, the group learned about proper techniques and how to read and analyze pressure points on logs and limbs. Fourteen participants left the weekend with certifications for crosscut bucking.

Chainsaw- Chainsaw training was the next weekend with 10 participants. These individuals went over personal protection equipment, proper technique, safety, and saw maintenance. The next day, participants showed their new skills in the field with bucking, limbing, and brushing a blowdown area. They also sharpened their chainsaw and did field maintenance while under supervision of "C Sawyers." Participants received "A Sawyer" training for bucking and limbing.



Crosscut Saw Sharpening



Shout Outs!!

Master Trail Stewards and Back Country Horseman, thanks for joining us for First Aid/CPR, Crosscut, and Chainsaw training!



LOOK AROUND

Spring Time in Southern Illinois Some things to look forward to!

March



Harbinger of Spring begin to bloom along wooded streams.

Mid March, watch out along the roads, it is Skunk breeding season.



Later in the month, White Pelicans are migrating along the Mississippi River.

April

Early in the month, the Whip-poor-wills are back in town.

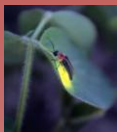


Mid month until the end, is mushroom hunting time. Find those Morels!

At the end of the month you can give a nice welcome to the Nighthawks who arrived from South America.



May



The Fireflies begin flashing at the start of May.

In Mid-May, the Beebalms begin to bloom in the woodlands.



Around the 20th start looking for young Woodchucks coming out of their dens.

Source: National Events Calendar, Events Consultation by Todd Fink

Harbinger of Spring

This native perennial wildflower is 3-10" tall, consisting of one or more stems with alternate leaves and compound umbels of flowers.

Some dappled sunlight is required during the spring, otherwise shade is tolerated. Moist to mesic conditions and a rich loamy soil with some rotting organic matter are preferred. Most vegetative growth and development occurs during the spring.

Harbinger-of-Spring has a scattered distribution throughout most of Illinois, but it is absent from the NW-quadrant of the state.

This is one of the earliest wildflowers to bloom in our deciduous woodlands. Because of its small flowers and low growth habit, it is rather easy to overlook. Also, when observed from a distance, Harbinger-of-Spring can be confused with other wildflowers with small white flowers. Another common name is 'Pepper-and-Salt Plant,' which refers to the anthers of the flowers (after they have become black) and the bright white petals. This wildflower is fairly distinctive because of its period of early bloom, stout stems, oddly colored anthers, and tight umbellets of flowers with narrow white petals.

Tips for Backpacking Lighter and Smarter (continued)

- Carry only what you're wearing** for short trips in moderate conditions, and only these five other essentials: Shelter/raingear, sleeping bag, water, food, and fire starter.
- If you run out of sunscreen**, no worries, white toothpaste is a quick fix in emergencies to cover crucial areas and prevent burning.
- Think Small.** Eye-drop bottles are great for carrying soap, Tobasco, and first-aid disinfectant. Pop the topper off, disinfect with mild bleach, then refill (Mini liquor bottles work also).
- Prepare for Darkness.** Mark important items like flashlights, water bottles, headlamps, etc. with glow-in-the-dark tape or paint or easy locating at night.
- Use your watch as a compass.** If you are lost without a compass, point the hour hand of your watch at the sun. Halfway between the hour hand and the 12 on the watch will be south. This even works with Daylight Saving Time.

Shawnee Volunteer Corps is NOW on Facebook and Twitter!
Check us out and join to stay up-to-date on the latest news!



RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER

Spring Volunteer Fever Already?

Here are some opportunities to join the Shawnee Volunteer Corps as we continue to improve trail conditions, protect valuable resources and connect with fellow volunteers.

Sunday April, 11 join the Shawnee Volunteer Corps as we work with local packers and their pack stock to haul gravel in to previously constructed steps and causeways on the River to River Trail in Bald Knob Wilderness.

All spring work days begin at 10 a.m. at the Murphysboro Work Center. Please arrive at 9:30 a.m. to complete some necessary paperwork.

Please wear long pants and remember to layer your clothing as the weather could change throughout the time we are working. Bring gloves if you have them, pack a lunch and bring along some water.

Registration for work days is easy just call the Shawnee Volunteer Corps at 618-687-1731 ext. 125.

In addition to the open volunteer dates the Shawnee Volunteer Corps will be welcoming back the students from Fieldcrest Middle School for 3rd Alternative Spring Break Experience in March.

Also joining us for their first Shawnee National Forest Alternative Spring Break will be students from Western New England College in Massachusetts.

Girl Scouts from throughout Southern Illinois will be joining together to work on footbridges in the Johnson Creek area in April.

Snake Migration

It's that time again! Every year biannually the Forest Service closes LaRue Road for two months in both the spring and the fall to accommodate the Snake Migration. The snakes take shelter and hibernate in the bluffs during the winter months, then return to the swampy area in the summer months for feeding time. The Road will be closed from March 15th to May 15th.

Please remember that there are poisonous snakes that do cross the road during this migration. Stay safe and appreciate the wildlife.

Shawnee Group Sierra Club Group Outing Dates!

March 14 Round Bluff Nature Preserve/Bork Waterfall, Goreville. Meet at 12:30 at the Murdale Shopping Center sign in Carbondale or 1PM at former Walmart parking lot in Marion.

April 11 Perry County Community Lake Loop, Perryville, MO. Meet at 9:30 at the Murphysboro Ranger Station or 10:15 at Popeye statue in Chester.

May 11 East Trigg Trail, Simpson, IL. Meet at 9:30 at the Murdale Shopping Center sign in Carbondale or 10 AM at former Walmart parking lot in Marion.

Find more information at:

<<http://illinois.sierraclub.org/shawnee/outings.htm>>



Answer: Little Grand Canyon

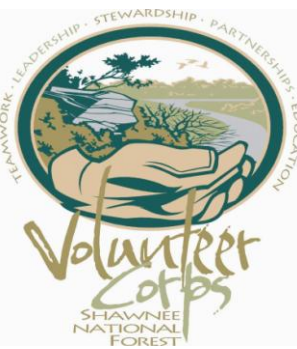


Remember to turn in your hours to Kelly, Tom or Kristyn!





Crooked Tree Trail Volunteer Day



Thank You

Volunteers have provided over **1500** hours of service to the Shawnee National Forest since October 1, 2009.

Thank you for your continued support!



Blue-eyed Mary

There is a delight in the hardy life of the open. There are no words that can tell the hidden spirit of the wilderness that can reveal its mystery, its melancholy and its charm. The nation behaves well if it treats the natural resources as assets which it must turn over to the next generation increased and not impaired in value. Conservation means development as much as it does protection.

-Theodore Roosevelt

Reflections

I hope everyone had the opportunity to venture out this winter and experience how truly amazing the Forest is with a blanket of snow. Looking at critter tracks running here and there; experiencing how quiet the woods seem and thankfully for anyone who spends time in the Forest in the summer there are no bugs!! I think you will all agree with me when I say WELCOME SPRING!!

The Shawnee Volunteer Corps is looking forward to a very active spring with several workdays scheduled for local volunteers. We will be hosting regional and national groups for Alternative Spring Breaks and the Master Trail Stewards will be completing their course work.

I hope you all have an opportunity this spring to visit your favorite trail or maybe find a new trail to explore. Look for Blue Eyed Marys and Harbingers of Spring, listen for the sound of whip-poor-wills and feel the warmth of spring sunshine. Happy Trails and Happy Spring!

-Kelly

CONTACT US

Kelly Pearson
Tom Sniegowski
Kristyn Stauber

Shawnee Volunteer Corps

Phone: 618-687-1731 ext. 125

E-Mail: shawneevolunteercorps@yahoo.com

*Teamwork, Leadership, Stewardship,
Partnership, Education*

WOULD YOU LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEWSLETTER?

Email us or drop off your story or article and it could be included in the next Volunteer Vibe Newsletter!!

